

PSYCHOLOGICAL, PEDAGOGICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PECULIARITIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' VOLITIONAL QUALITIES AS A FACTOR OF SUCCESS IN LEARNING

Dr. Nadiia Vientseva, Assoc. Prof.

Berdyansk State Pedagogical University (Ukraine)

Dr. Olena Karapetrova

University named after Alfred Nobel – Dnipro (Ukraine)

Abstract. The article reports the results of the empirical study of the impact of volitional qualities development on the level of academic achievements of higher education institution students. The article gives a theoretical analysis of the main types of volitional qualities that affect the assimilation of educational material by students. There was established the level of their development and the relationship with academic achievements. The article also identifies the main psycho-pedagogical and organizational peculiarities that affect the success of mastering the knowledge by university students. The psychological and pedagogical recommendations for forming, developing and supporting the volitional sphere of students are developed.

Keywords: will; emotional-volitional sphere; success' educational activity

1. The urgency of the problem

The formation of volitional qualities is one of the most difficult processes of the work of an individual on himself. It depends on many psycho-physiological and social parameters, such as the feature of the nervous system, an individual's beliefs, the goals he sets for himself, and so on. This is the question of constant overcoming not only external (objective) obstacles, but also internal (subjective) ones. An individual will be able to regulate his activity if he has learned to manage his habits, interests, desires.

The study of volitional qualities is determined by the needs of a number of public institutions directly involved in the process of formation and education of members of the society. Every year, the family, school, and environment make new and new moral, ethical, social, and professional demands on the young person. This sets

out certain tasks for higher education institutions and identifies priorities in education, training and development, as well as emphasizes the education of an active individual who can exercise willful control over his actions and overcome difficulties. After all, on the way to mastering the profession, students face many obstacles and not all young people can overcome them. Therefore, the problem of studying volitional qualities and their impact on academic performance is especially relevant in this period of human life.

2. The aim of the study is to substantiate theoretically and study empirically the relationship between the volitional qualities of students and their academic achievements.

3. The current state of the problem researched

In Pedagogy and Psychology, the problem of will and volitional qualities has always been relevant and at the same time complex. After all, a person is not born with certain volitional qualities. They are formed and developed in the process of life, learning, education and development. Until the twentieth century, this idea was the key in the theories of W. Wundt, W. James and T. Ribeuau. However, in the 30s of the last century, the concept of freedom gradually receded into the background, giving way to such definitions as motivation, social attitude (attitude), value and others.

As a result, in the psychological literature for almost half a century there was no thorough work on the problems of the development of the will. Although the fact of human self-regulation of their behavior forced psychologists to return to the question of will, often using different terminology.

The inability of traditional cognitive models and approaches for understanding motivation and explaining the essence of purposeful human behavior has forced a number of foreign researchers to turn again to the concept of will and related concepts of self-regulation and self-control. (Baumeister 2016; Kuh 1996; Mische 2011).

Thus, insufficient study of the problem mentioned has determined the direction of our study in which we do not only consider the development of will, but also raise the problem of forming the volitional qualities of first-year students as determinants of successful training at higher educational institution.

When studying at a higher education institution, students must exercise volitional control over their actions, regulate new for them activities and overcome the difficulties that arise. After all, on the way to mastering the profession, they face many obstacles. Many difficulties arise when adapting to new conditions, rules, norms in force at school, as well as new and at the same time complex educational tasks require young people to have the ability to work with educational and scientific literature, to distribute their time between educational activities, life and leisure at home or dormitory, to demonstrate organization, perseverance,

endurance. Sometimes it is the lack of these strong-willed qualities and skills that leads to the decrease in success during the educational process and the loss of interest in educational activities in general and in the future profession in particular (Stambulova 1986).

In this context, there is a need to identify tools, techniques and methods needed to solve this problem.

In Pedagogy, when considering the formation of will and volitional qualities for a long time a motivational approach has been used. That is, all methods, techniques and technologies were based on the understanding of the will as an internally regulated motivation.

However, there is another approach – a regulatory one in Psychological and Pedagogical science – A. Ben, T. Ribo, W. James, Ch. Sherrington, I. M. Sechenov, V. K. Kalin, V. I. Selivanov etc. (Kalin 1983), which, in our opinion, is more appropriate when considering the student audience. Because a regulatory approach, along with the semantic one, also highlights the dynamic side of the will, realized with the help of volitional effort.

However, none of these approaches is perfect, considering the mechanism of volitional qualities formation unilaterally: either in terms of motivation or as a conscious regulation of human behavior and activities. After analyzing both approaches, we came to the conclusion that in the formation of volitional qualities of students should use both approaches. As motivation enables a person to achieve a goal through internal motivation, but internal motivation can lead to both positive and negative consequences depending on the emotional mood of the person which affects the results of the action and then joins regulation as the ability to regulate their internal states, actions and mental processes together lead to the formation of positive motives and the formation of volitional qualities that contribute to successful learning.

4. The study of the level of development of students' volitional qualities

In the context of the above mentioned, it is considered timely and necessary the empirical study involving 146 students (full study form of education) of the 1st and 2nd year of of study at Berdyansk State Pedagogical University, Faculty of Humanities and Economics (specialties: Law, Management and Secondary Education. History) with different levels of academic achievements and with different student ratings.

At the first stage, we analyzed the test data and divided the students into three groups: high, medium and low level ones according to the levels of their academic achievements.

The students whose grade point average for the semester according to the credit-module system ranged from 82 to 100 points (grades A – B “excellent” and “good”) were included to the first group and accounted 25%. The second group included students with a grade point average from 70 to 82 points (grades B – C “good”) and

accounted 32%. The group with a low level of academic achievements included students whose grade point average ranged from 50 to 69 points (grades C – D – E “satisfactory” and “good”) and accounted 22%. The distribution of students by the level of their academic achievements is given in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of students according to the level of their academic achievements

level of academic achievements	grade point average	Absolute number of students	%
High	90-100	36	25
Middle	65-89	63	32
Low	50-69	47	22
Totally		146	100

The table shows that the majority of students (32%) have an average level of academic achievements (from 65 to 89 GPA), but there are students (22%) whose level of academic achievements is low. So the problem is there and therefore the second stage of our research was to study the formation of students’ volitional qualities.

It should be noted that scientists – V. Kalin, P. Rudyk, A. Puni, N. Dobrynin, etc., identify from 10 to 34 components of volitional qualities of a personality.

Based on the analysis of the scientific literature and the method of observation, we have identified five will qualities, the formation and presence of which we consider necessary for successful learning:

Determination is an individual characteristic of the will, associated with the ability to make responsible decisions in a timely and independent manner and to implement them steadily.

Purposefulness is a conscious focus of an individual on achieving a more or less long-term goal, conscious overcoming of difficulties, which requires willpower and is based on maintaining the goal throughout the period of its achievement.

Persistence is the ability to fulfill constant, active, energetic actions, effectiveness in overcoming obstacles.

Patience is the ability to long-term resistance to obstacles. The will power in this case reveals its initiating function, encouraging a person to maintain the current state in spite of the situation.

Initiative is a strong-willed quality that manifests itself in the ability to take action, caused by one’s own attitudes, ideas, and beliefs. Initiative manifests itself in creativity, innovation, independence, resistance to external influences.

Self-control involves maintaining clarity of thought, controlling emotions in a difficult situation, the ability to control ones' actions in a state of stress.

Perseverance means a persistent desire for something, for accomplishing something, constant tension. It is the state when a person is full of steadfastness, determination, perseverance.

Independence is the ability to act without assistance, as well as the ability to be critical to other people's influences, evaluating them according to one's views and beliefs (Kalin 1983).

In order to diagnose the levels of development of students' volitional qualities, there were used such questionnaires as "Self-assessment of students' volitional qualities" – N. Stambulova, "Purposefulness", "Initiative and independence", "Self-control and endurance" (Stambulova 1986); "Assessment of one's perseverance", "Self-assessment of patience", "Assessment of one's perseverance" (Ilyin 2011); "Self-assessment of organization" (Yvannykov 1991). Each technique makes it possible to determine the level of development of a certain volitional quality by the parameters of severity and generalization, taking into account the points scored.

If we present the results of manifesting the volitional qualities indicated by us, according to all the methods used, they have the following form (Table 2).

Table 2. The results of the manifestation of students' volitional qualities in %

№ Volitional qualities	Methods of studying volitional qualities		
	"Self-assessment of students' volitional qualities"" "Purposefulness", "Initiative and independence" (Stambulova 1986)	"Assessment of one's persistence", "Self-assessment of patience" (Iliin 2011)	Assessment of the development of gross volitional qualities (Yvannykov1991)
Purposefulness	27%		30%
Initiative	28%		20%
Independence	15%		17%
Persistence		20%	21%
Patience		10%	15%

The table shows that students according to the results of the methods used there are more developed such qualities as purposefulness – 28%, initiative – 24% and perseverance – 20%. These are the qualities that determine the motivation to master the chosen profession and to get certain knowledge. Therefore, it is advisable to take this indicator into account at the initial stage of mastering the profession. Such qualities as independence – 16% and patience – 12% were less developed, that indicates maladaptation to new learning conditions and is explained by the peculiarities of age development.

Thus, the study of the development of these volitional qualities by three used methods led to the conclusion that the largest number of respondents are students with an average level of volitional qualities – 37%, are students with a low level of development of these qualities have almost the same indicator – 36%; only 27% of respondents have a high level of development of the volitional sphere.

The obtained results were processed using the method of comparing the selective average display of certain volitional qualities in each group with different levels of academic achievements. Comparative analysis showed the following:

In the group, with a high level of academic achievements, there were identified students with a high level of development indicators: purposefulness – 85%, initiative and independence – 83%, self-control, perseverance – 90%, persistence – 83%, patience – 81%.

In the group with a middle level of academic achievements, the following number of students was determined as a percentage: determination – 80%, initiative and independence – 70%, self-control, perseverance – 56%, perseverance – 60%, and patience – 78%.

The students of the group with a low level of success did not demonstrated high results: purposefulness, initiative and independence – 32%, self-control, perseverance – 42%, perseverance – 26%, patience – 47%.

The results of the ratio of the academic achievement level and the development of students' volitional qualities are presented in the picture 1.

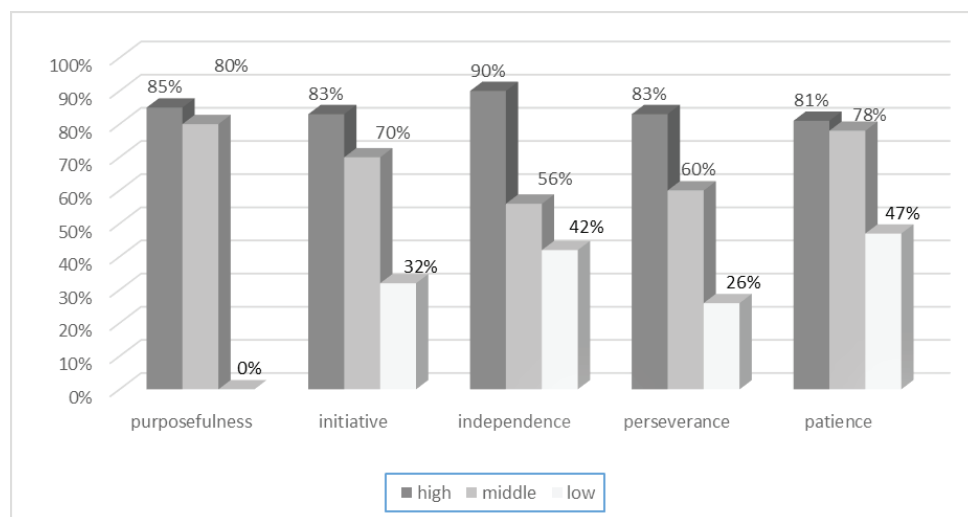


Figure 1. The diagram of the development of students' volitional qualities with different levels of academic achievements

Thus, the obtained and analyzed results make it possible to identify and characterize three types of students by the level of their academic performance and the manifestation and development of volitional qualities that contribute to better learning and increase the level of academic performance.

The students of the first group are characterized by high rates on all scales of methods, including a high level of patience, perseverance, willpower, determination, initiative, determination, endurance and self-control, organization. These components of volitional qualities, in our opinion, have the greatest impact on students' academic achievements.

They differ from other students by a strong will to win, desire and willingness to change the world for better, self-confidence, firmness, resilience and consistency, activity, entrepreneurship and ingenuity, the ability to maintain peace and self-confidence. It is the students of the first type who have the highest grade point average.

The students of the second group are characterized by average indicators on the scale "Patience" and the lowest level of development of volitional qualities such as persistence, perseverance, willpower, purposefulness, initiative, determination, endurance and self-control, organization. They differ from others by their inattention, instability, lack of self-confidence. More often than other students, they live on their own schedule; they are unpunctual, unhurried, not independent in business and decision-making.

The third group of students has intermediate (relative to the other two groups) indicators of the development of volitional qualities and academic achievements.

It is the group that unites the students with different levels of academic achievements. Both students who are doing well and students whose grade point average corresponds to a satisfactory grade are represented here. In our opinion, corrective work aimed at developing the volitional qualities of this group allows many of them to move to the first group.

5. Recommendations for the development of students' volitional qualities

Having analyzed the existing correctional and developmental methods for the development of the volitional sphere of such authors as Jules Peyo, V. Selevanova, N. Baumann, M. Kazen, M. Quirin, S. Kule and others in the psychological and pedagogical literature, we came to the conclusion that the education of will and volitional qualities is based on certain principles (the ability to own yourself; constant self-improvement in everything; the ability to predict the results and consequences of their actions; the ability to adequately assess the causes of unsucces and failure) and techniques (requirement, encouragement, control and others.) (Puni, 1983) However, this is only the part of the process. An important component of the development of volitional qualities is the subjective interaction of a student and a teacher, who in addition to pedagogical techniques should be aware of and use in his work psychological methods and techniques of education of students volitional qualities. After all, only cooperation, understanding

and acceptance of a student with all his characteristics will give the opportunity to feel and predict the actions in this direction.

Having analyzed the existing in the scientific psychological and pedagogical literature correctional and developmental methods for the volitional sphere we made the conclusion that it is necessary to develop a comprehensive program that should include working with students as well as with teachers who should improve communication skills and teaching a discipline using psychological and pedagogical techniques that promote the development of volitional qualities and increase the level of academic achievement.

In addition, it is proved that it is necessary to use trainings conducted by an expert psychologist. The cooperation of psychologists and teachers is also important to acquaint them with the specifics of trainings, giving advice and assistance in selecting methods of corrective influence on the volitional sphere of students.

For the formation of volitional qualities it is not enough to use individual techniques or one proven tool. Therefore, the program includes consulting and information work with teachers in order to teach them comprehensive actions aimed at developmental and corrective work to increase the level of development of volitional qualities that affect the students' academic achievements.

Individual developmental and corrective work will allow teachers to influence personally the level of academic achievement through the use of exercises and tasks that train and increase the level of development of students' willpower.

Thus, the aim of the program is to increase the level of students' volitional qualities in the process of studying in higher educational institution.

The objectives of the program are:

1. Illuminative work with teachers on the use of certain methods and techniques for the development of students' volitional qualities that affect the assimilation of educational material.

2. Work with students on the development and improvement of the volitional sphere.

Illuminative work with teachers includes conducting master classes, webinars, methodological seminars on this problem, the organization and the conduct of which is aimed at understanding and mastering certain provisions by teachers:

- A. For the successful formation of students' volitional qualities, it is necessary to create certain pedagogical conditions that provide: clear understanding the purpose of the educational process; the systematic and gradual increase in the level of complexity of tasks in the learning process; the formation of students' self-confidence, conscious desire for self-improvement, the ability to self-control and self-assessment of their activities, the ability to control themselves in the case of unexpected difficulties and situations involving risk

- B. Developing the students' volitional qualities means to organize their activity, to teach them to act wisely, to form the ability to work intensively and systematically, to overcome difficulties in life and work, to develop the habit of being always an ener-

getic, determined, persistent person, to form the ability to subordinate their activities to consciously set goals, overcoming extraneous desires, fears, laziness, etc.

3. The main method of educating volitional behavior is to set reasonable requirements in various forms (a requirement-trust, a requirement-request, a requirement-advice), to motivate students, which will ensure the development of awareness.

In order to understand the provisions mentioned and to create conditions for improving the students' willpower, we have developed a number of recommendations for teachers of higher educational institutions, that is:

A. to replace classical lectures by problem lectures and round table lectures, the peculiarity of which is that the teacher sets a certain task for the students, and gives students the opportunity to freely discuss issues and express their own point of view. Such lectures awaken in young people the desire to find answers to problematic questions through cooperation and dialogue, which stimulates students to active cognitive activity and promotes the development of purposefulness and initiative.

B. to complicate gradually but systematically tasks for practical classes. At the first stage of mastering the material, the tasks should correspond to the level of students' preparedness in the discipline. This will create an opportunity for success, will cause satisfaction with the task fulfilled, the desire for self-development.

C. to use the group forms of work with students. Groups can be: homogeneous ones – when all students perform the same written or practical task; differentiated ones – groups of students perform different tasks; cooperative ones – each group performs the part of the common task for all; paired ones – educational activities take place in microgroups of two students; individual-group ones – when each member of the group performs the part of the group task. Group forms of work contribute to the activation and effectiveness of student learning, education of humane relationships between them, independence, the ability to prove and defend their point of view, as well as to listen to the opinions of peers, the culture of dialogue, the responsibility for the results of their work.

D. to stimulate the responsibility of students when working in groups. The peculiarity is that when solving problems in practical classes or when finding answers to questions at lectures, to place the responsibility for the organization of work on certain students. It forms persistence, perseverance, responsibility.

As mentioned above, work with young people involves training work with a psychologist and aims at improving and correcting the volitional sphere of students who have problems with learning.

The basic principles of harmonization of volitional character traits are

- the principle of integrity, which means the formation of a responsible attitude to everything that happens in human life;

- the principle of dichotomous, which means the presence of parity of mutually exclusive character traits (signs of dominance of a harmonious nature, which are excluded in the case of disharmonious nature);

– the principle of positivity, which is the focus of the individual on positive in relation to others, different situations, life in general.

An individual should not reflect the external negative, but neutralize it with his own positive (to stop the negative at the initial stage with a good joke, a kind word, a confession of wrongdoing). Complex situations should be considered as conditions for building optimal actions. Adherence to the principle of positivity develops positive thinking – the ability to interpret problem situations in terms of optimism, finding alternative ways to solve them creatively (Pavlik 2013).

The training consists of three classes of two academic hours.

The classes include tasks to understand the dichotomy of volitional character traits, awareness of the stages of the volitional action, the development of self-control, the ability to control ones feelings, the development of goal-setting skills and the implementation of volitional actions, reflection and development of volitional qualities, mobilization of will to overcome difficult situations, the ability to refuse an unreasonable request.

Lesson 1

Purpose: self-development of strong-willed character traits (self-control, organization, patience).

Objectives: awareness of the dichotomy of volitional traits, awareness of the stages of volitional action, the development of self-control, the ability to control their own feelings.

Lesson structure.

Theoretical information (30 minutes):

1. The concept of “the will” (10 minutes)
2. Mental excitability (“explosiveness”) – self-control (10 minutes).
3. Stages of volitional action, (15 minutes).

Practical exercises (60 minutes)

The technique of will development “Breakfast must be earned” (10 minutes). “Lazy Eights” (20 minutes). Exercise “Circle and Triangle” (20 minutes)

Lesson 2

Purpose: gaining practical experience of volitional self-regulation.

Objectives: developing skills of goal-setting and volitional actions implementation, reflection and development of volitional qualities, mobilization of will for overcoming difficult situations, the ability to refuse the unreasonable request

Practical exercises (90 minutes):

1. Self-analysis “Self-control” (25 minutes).
2. Exercise “Bring the case for me to the end!” (25 minutes).
3. Exercise “Say “No” (20 minutes).
4. Role-playing game “Difficult situations” (45 minutes).
5. Reflection (20 minutes)

Lesson 3

Purpose: the development of experience in regulating self-confidence and one's actions, achieving success.

Objectives: gaining practical experience of confidence in ones' actions and motivation for achieving success.

Lesson structure:

Theoretical information (30 minutes)

1. Self-confidence (10 minutes)
2. Motivation motivation (10 minutes.)
3. Achieving success. (10 minutes)

Practical exercises (60 minutes)

1. "Commercial" (10 minutes)
2. "My achievements" (10 minutes)
3. "Diary of actions for achieving the goal" (15 minutes)
4. Rainbow of emotions (10 minutes)
5. Reflection (15 minutes)

6. Conclusion

Thus, the success of a student's educational activity in higher educational institution is determined by the peculiarity of the development of volitional qualities, namely purposefulness, endurance, self-control, initiative, independence, organization, persistence, patience in particular. The level of students' academic achievement depends on the level of the development of their volitional qualities.

Since the success of educational and later professional activities is due to the personal students' qualities, in particular strong-willed ones; they need to be developed when studying at higher educational institutions. Here the tasks of both the general development of the student and the development of his volitional qualities, corresponding to the requirements of the future profession, must be solved. The formation of the will in the conditions of higher education, ie purposeful psychological and pedagogical work, which would encourage the development of willpower, volitional qualities in students, should become an integral part of the educational process.

REFERENCES

- Baumeister, R. & Vohs, K., 2016. Strength Model of Self- Regulation as Limited Resource: Assessment, Controversies, Update. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 54, 67 – 127.
- Kuh, J., 1996. Who controls whom when "I control myself"? *Psychological Inquiry*, 7(1), 61 – 68.
- Mische, W., Ayduk, O., Berman, M.G., Casey, B.J., Gotlib, I.H., Jonides, J., Kross, E., Teslovich, T., Wilson, N.L., Zayas, V. & Shoda, Y., 2011. Will-

- power over the life span: decomposing self-regulation. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, **6**(2), 252 – 256.
- Ilyin, E., 2011. *Psychology of will*. S.-Pb.: Peter.
- Pavlik, N., 2013. *Educational and psychological special course: harmonization of personality in adolescence: a method. recommendations*. K.: Logos.
- Stambulova, N., 1986. On the question of the stages of development of volitional personality traits. *Emotional-volitional regulation of behavior and activity*, 13 – 18.
- Kalin, W., 1983. Classification of volitional qualities. *Emotional-volitional regulation of behavior and activity*, 5, 175 – 182.
- Yvannykov, V., 1991. *Psychological mechanisms of volitional regulation*. Moskva: MSU.

✉ **Dr. Nadiia Vientseva, Assoc. Prof.**

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1994-7187

Berdyansk State Pedagogical University

Humanities and Economics Faculty

Berdyansk, Ukraine

E-mail: no_venceva@bdpu.ua

✉ **Dr. Olena Karapetrova**

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9751-6788

Department of Innovative Technologies in Pedagogy

Psychology and Social Work

Alfred Nobel University

Dnipro, Ukraine

E- mail: karapetrova.o@duan.edu.ua